PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Christian Community

A Program Service of the Council for Social Action of the
Congregational Christian Churches, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.
and the Commission on Christian Social Action of the
Evangelical and Reformed Church, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio

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Toward A More Useful Christian Community

The social action agencies of the two denominations which publish this newsletter jointly are always on the look-out for ways in which they can more effectively serve their constituency—the men and women who make up the local churches of our communions. Especially do we share an interest in making *Christian Community* more useful to the pastors, officers, committee members, and organized groups in these congregations.

Within the past year CSA, the Congregational Christian partner in this enterprise, appointed a Publications Review committee which studied the whole problem of periodicals and communication. Its recommendations were shared with the Evangelical and Reformed leadership as well as with CSA itself. As a result of this collaboration we have agreed to certain innovations, which we trust will meet with general acceptance.

1. We are "stepping up" production so that after the present year, *Christian Community* will appear ten times per year, instead of eight as heretofore. In 1953 we plan to have nine issues. This will afford not only more material during the ten months when church activities are most sustained, it will mean that some of this material will be more fresh and timely when it appears.

2. The experiment of having in each issue an "international relations letter" has led to the recommendation that news and comment in other areas of concern be given similar regular treatment. In addition to Herman Reissig's

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Church Groups Look in on Washington

Buckingham Studio, Inc.

Evangelical and Reformed delegates greeted in office of Congressman John P. Saylor (R., Pa.) were among 210 representatives of all denominations who participated in the Churchmen's Washington Seminar February 24 to 27. Mr. Saylor, a member of the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, is chairman of the sub-committee which has recommended statehood for Hawaii. Urgent business prevented Edward A. Garmatz (D., Md.), the other "E & R" congressman, from meeting with the group.

Announce United Nations-World Order Seminar

The Council for Social Action and the Commission on Christian Social Action have announced a jointly sponsored UNITED NATIONS AND WORLD ORDER SEMINAR, to be held in New York City, October 12 to 14.

Discussions on outstanding international problems will be held by experts from the United States government, the United Nations, and private organizations. One day will be spent at United Nations Headquarters.

Because it is necessary to limit attendance to one hundred persons, those interested should make their plans early. Cost: travel, meals, lodging, plus two dollar registration fee.

For further information, Congregational Christians should write to Herman F. Reissig, 289 Fourth Ave., New York 10; Evangelical and Reformed to Huber F. Klemme, 2969 West 25th St., Cleveland 13, Ohio.

CHURCH AND RACE

Before this appears in print, we may have the decision of the Supreme Court on the segregation in education cases argued last December. Hardly anyone supposes the opinion will fail to make at least some advance over the *status quo* although few are sanguine enough to anticipate a sweeping ruling that segregation per se, in education, is unconstitutional. If the court declares, as in *Sipuel v. University of Oklahoma,* that equal facilities must be provided for all children regardless of color as soon as they are available for any children, the consequences will be nearly the same as if segregation itself were to be outlawed. Only in a few places are facilities for Negro children in fact equal to those for whites. In most places, and particularly in the South, genuine equalization is much too costly to put into effect even if the court should allow several years for the achievement of parity.

No doubt there will be evasions of the ruling—which in any case applies initially only to the five school districts from which the cases are brought. However, suits will continue to be brought, probably many of them, and a precedent (it is assumed) will be established for speedier and less costly court determination. A very large number of people in the South understand that widespread desegregation in public education is inevitable within a relatively short period in any case.

More than a few communities outside of the South will have to bring their school practices into line with non-segregation principles. The most stubborn fact making this difficult is the pattern of segregated residential living that has spread widely in the urban north particularly since 1920. But even this barrier is breaking down since the 1948 decision of the Supreme Court that ruled racial or religious restrictive covenants unenforceable. The suburban residential areas are the chief strongholds left to all-white occupancy. Even these are destined to capitulate gradually until racially mixed communities become the ruling pattern of residential living in the United States. This achievement will result in a reduction of tensions. Meanwhile it is to be hoped that religiously segregated neighborhoods—Jewish, Catholic, Protestant—will not increase in number and rigidity.

The public school and the church both have a stake in non-segregated residential living. Genuine democracy can-

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Washington Report

There may be a few incidental housekeeping chores yet to be attended to, but the principal offices of Washington are now well swept out and open for business. The kind of business that will be attended to first, however, is not necessarily that most talked about in the religious press.

The McCarran-Walter law, for example, has agitated church circles more than any other law of the last Congress. The tempo of criticism, if anything, has increased since the 83rd took over. But Senator Watkins, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, has calmly observed that while he is willing to review the law, he does not believe it a "failure." The simple political fact most to be kept in mind—Washington certainly doesn't underestimate it — is that the last Congress rolled right over a presidential veto with speed and power. Since the new Congress operates in the same general climate of public opinion, there will be no great hurry to bring about a reversal.

On the international level the issues on which action will be taken are those forced by fixed dates. Mutual Security programs are authorized only until June 30, and the President's authority to negotiate reciprocal trade agreements expires June 12. Extensions of the authorizations are not the only occasions of new and significant policy making. Policy can be written, and often has been written, in terms of appropriations. New funds will be required for Point IV and the specialized agencies of the United Nations (like UNESCO, FAO, WHO) if our participation continues past June 30.

On the domestic level Congressional attention may focus more rapidly on farm than on industrial problems. Extended hearings on federal labor law seem now promised. Other actions can wait. But sliding agricultural prices and pressures exerted by various powerful forces within the farm bloc may compel Congressional moves very soon. There is, for example, a current demand to freeze supports of 90% parity on six basic commodities up to 1957, and another or two that would have a definite effect on international trade agreements.

The action on Rule 22 of January 8 seems to mean that civil rights legislation will not be treated with any degree of urgency. By the time this is in print, the usual battery of civil rights bills will have been introduced—anti-lynching, anti-poll tax, FEPC, and one calling for creation of a special bureau in the Department of Justice for the protection of civil rights. But the prospects of action on a federal FEPC are remote enough that the many labor and social groups interested in employment discrimination are turning to the 18 states, in which FEPC bills will be introduced, in the hope of earlier achievements. The Adminstration's decision to allow the District of Columbia civil rights issues to be handled under the "state's rights" theory has caused sharp disappointment.

The old rule of thumb is that a new Congress takes care of the things first in which party leadership has most direct interest. The bulk of legislation generally comes in the second year or the second session of a Congress. It is then that there is a tendency to build the party record so that it will be fresh in mind for the ensuing campaign. Thus action on federal aid to education, medical care, social security changes—if any such are to come—may well be some months from now.

For church and other groups concerned about national issues there is opportunity to get down to serious study and cultivation of neighborhood and community opinion. Nobody in Washington, as the saying goes, cares anything about what anybody else in Washington says. It's when the people back home start talking that Congress—and the Administration—starts listening.

The first of the Washington Packet series on Issues for Christian Citizenship, dealing with the McCarran-Walter law, is now available to social action and other church discussion groups. The mailing for April 1st will be on world trade problems. These packets can be ordered from the Council for Social Action at 289 Fourth Avenue. New York 10, New York. It is one way of helping to inform the church about some major tasks the 83rd approaches.

Francis W. McPeek

International Relations Letter

March 5, 1953

One of the advantages of being a traveling secretary is the widening of one's perspective. I have just returned from a 17-day tour of three mid-Western states. Without drawing more conclusions than the facts warrant, I would like to report the following: There were 26 meetings. In all but three, which were church services, there was plenty of time for questions and discussion. Dissenters from what the speaker said were particularly, and earnestly, urged to speak out. Result: in one meeting with ministers, one man was critical of the C.S.A.—more accurately, hostile toward it, and another had some reservations. In one meeting with a local church committee, two laymen had some criticisms. This was the sum total of criticism encountered on the whole tour!

Many of the talks were on the world situation, including the United Nations and Point 4. Not one person expressed a serious objection to any major point. On the contrary, the response was as good as a believer in the U. N. and in Point 4 could have wished. And this in the supposedly "isolationist" mid-West! It was, to be sure, evident, that many had known little about these two subjects. But, unanimously, they talked and acted as if they were glad to have assurance that the U. N. is doing well under extreme difficulties, as if they were not attracted to a go-it-alone policy. And they responded warmly to a description of what Point 4 is doing. One *heard* about attacks on the U. N. There was even a report of a meeting in one town where the speaker had said, "Whenever you hear someone talk a lot about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man you can make up your mind he is a communist." I am only reporting that in these 26 meetings —attendance ranging from six to 400— one could find plenty of support for the belief that when people in our churches are given the facts they will respond with personal support.

One more observation. When social action is accurately presented to members of our churches very few of them are against it—provided they have not previously received their only impressions from mis-representers and misinterpreters. One minister in whose church I spoke told me in advance of the meeting that there wasn't a chance of "doing anything about social action in this church." After the meeting, the audience having reacted favorably to an outline of what a local church could do, I said to the minister, "Do you think you could have some such program in your church?" His reply was, "Yes, I think we could do that."

Granted that in some churches the job of taking hold of social issues in a systematic and positive fashion is difficult, we must, and can, stick to the conviction that, given patient, courageous and intelligent leadership, the great majority of our church members are ready to study and to act. And they will grant to the denominational social action agency the right to be mistaken at this or that point—and give it their support just the same.

If the above does not seem to have much to do with international relations, there is a reason. I am personally getting a little tired of a familiar pattern. The pattern consists of reading an article or listening to a speech or sermon on international relations — or some aspect of it—nodding our heads in approval ("Fine article!" "Good speech!") but never getting down to the business of arranging our church life so that there is systematic and regular participation in study and action. Sermons and speeches are not enough. Private study is not enough. Christians need to put their heads together, assisting each other to think and also to act, whether as individuals or as a church. And it can be done! In every church!

How does a church go about it. Here is one answer. The C.S.A. has a little drama called, "Social Action Comes to First Church." The drama tells the story of how one, hypothetical, church did it. Required for presentation: One thorough rehearsal: No memory work. A church in New York State is presenting the drama in the chancel, in place of the sermon. Send for a copy (25 cents); it might help you.

Herman F. Reissig

ECONOMIC LIFE

An outstanding illustration of effective collaboration between religious and secular agencies toward a common objective in the social action field is the current project going forward under my direction in search for ways of improving the educational experiences and opportunities of agricultural migrant children.

Initial sponsorship of the study came from the National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor following a suggestion from the Council for Social Action. C.S.A., C.C.S.A. and 28 other national religious, civic, farm and labor organizations compose the NCALL. Co-sponsorship of this study project has been shared by six other organizations, four of them religious (Division of Home Missions, National Catholic Rural Life Conference, American Friends Service Committee, and C.S.A.) and two secular (National Education Association and National Child Labor Committee).

The major funds have come from the Congregational Christian Committee for Relief and Reconstruction, technical advice and assistance on a volunteer basis from a score of colleges, public agencies and professional educational groups.

The study project consists of a series of four intensive local case studies designed to sample the problem at strategic spots in the various migratory labor streams. Palm Beach County, Florida, and Northampton County, Virginia, will give us insight into the problems of the eastern Negro stream of migration; Guadalupe County, Texas, and Vermilion County, Illinois, will represent the Spanish American stream. Only lack of funds prevents analysis of the far western situation.

In the selected communities, field workers of the racial or nationality group involved conduct extensive interviews with migrant families. School teachers, principals, growers and others are interviewed. School records are analyzed. Tests are given designed to compare school achievement, emotional adjustment, personality growth and social attitudes of migrant and resident children.

The study will continue throughout 1953. In subject matter this project is secular: improved public school programs for migrant children. In objective it is profoundly religious: to meet a human need and to enrich the personalities of a great group of God's forgotten children. This is what Christian social action should be!

Shirley E. Greene

A More Useful Christian Community

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International Relations Letter, we will from time to time carry Washington Report—news and interpretation of developments in government and legislation. A briefer discussion of Church and Race will be presented in alternate months by Galen Weaver and Jefferson Rogers. Issues in Economic Life will be similarly divided between agricultural and industrial relations.

In addition we shall continue to offer general articles on the problems before us, suggestions for action, and (provided you share it with us) news of what our churches are doing in Christian social action.

On Using Christian Community

But after the paper is written, edited, printed, and mailed out it us up to the ultimate consumer. Only the reader can decide whether or not it will be used—and used to fullest advantage. However, we are not too modest to make a few suggestions based on the experience of our readers.

1. If you are a pastor and have a social action committee, find out what the chairman is prepared to do about the questions or recommendations found in the current issue. If you have no committee, share your copy with a layman who is interested and informed, or would be if you helped him—and see about getting a committee appointed.

2. If you are a social action committee chairman, see that your committee discusses at least the "high spots" of the issue. (Look for a box headed "To the Social Action Committee.") Ask what you should do—conduct a study group, hold a forum, make an announcement, write a letter?

3. If the main topic of the issue is of special interest to the entire congregation, or to a considerable portion of it, order enough copies to distribute to the membership or at least to the core of leaders who should be informed. Or, a few copies may be placed on the church literature table. You may be surprised to discover how many people will pick them up. In ordering extra copies, indicate the issue desired by month and year. If you order any material suggested state clearly by title what you want.

4. When you have done everything else, file your copy so that it can be referred to later.

LEADERS AIR VIEWS ON FAITH AND WORK

The Department of the Church and Economic Life of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. has announced that beginning Sunday, May 3, and continuing for nine Sundays, the National Broadcasting Company will carry a fifteen-minute program entitled "Faith in Action." Charles P. Taft, Reinhold Niebuhr, and outstanding economists, churchmen, labor, management, and professional leaders will be heard in a series of "conversations" on the relation of Christianity to daily work.

These conversations will be based upon the information gleaned and the questions raised by the Department's recently completed research project financed by the Rockefeller Foundation, the first two volumes of which have been published by Harper Brothers. Among the topics to be considered are: "What is Success in America?" "Can We be Moral and Successful?" "Social Responsibility or Social Control?" "Shall I Splurge or Save?" These programs should receive wide attention from Christian people. Since in many areas they will be heard at 9:45 A. M., Eastern Standard Time, men's and women's church school classes may wish to "tune in" on these broadcasts and follow them with further informal discussion of the issues raised by the broadcast.

Groups planning to follow this suggestion should check local radio stations to verify any change in schedule.

Correction:

In the March issue of *Christian Community* the American Lutheran Church was listed among the denominations which have declared themselves in favor of social security for ministers. The Evangelical Free Church of America should have been listed instead. The American Lutheran Church voted not to request the extension of social security but stated that "in the event that the Government of the United States should extend the benefits of Old Age and Survivors' Insurance to clergymen, the American Lutheran Church will not stand in the way of pastors' desires to participate in these benefits." We are grateful to the Reverend Carl F. Reuss, Executive Secretary of the Board for Christian Social Action of the American Lutheran Church for providing this information.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Additional copies may be obtained for 2½ cents each. Requests from Congregational Christians should be addressed to Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York. Requests by Evangelical and Reformed, and others, as well as news items and communications, should be addressed to the Editor, Huber F. Klemme, Commission on Christian Social Action, 2969 West 25th Street, Cleveland 13, Ohio.

Francis W. McPeek Resigns

The Rev. Francis W. McPeek, Industrial Relations secretary of the Council for Social Action for the last six years, has resigned to become Executive Director of the Chicago Commission on Human Relations. He began his work with the Commission on March 16.

Mr. McPeek won wide recognition among laymen and ministers in the Congregational Christian Churches for his informed, understanding interpretation of labor and management. In addition to industrial problems, he has been concerned with alcoholism, mental and penal institutions, public housing, and personal counselling. His weekly mimeographed *Labor Letter* was avidly read by a wide and increasing number of leaders. Mr. McPeek was the author of many C.S.A. pamphlets and a contributor to *Christian Community*.

The Directors of the Council for Social Action will seek a successor to Mr. McPeek as soon as financial resources permit. They believe that he has done outstanding work in his period of service with the Council and they deeply regret his departure. His many friends and fellow staff members wish him all joy and success in his new position.

CHURCH AND RACE

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not be effectively taught in a racially or religiously segregated school since direct experience of normal associations in school, playground and neighborhood is the really efficient teacher. Genuine Christianity is equally difficult to practice in a deliberately exclusive church and neighborhood environment. A local church comes alive at one of the most critical points of spiritual growth and strength when it welcomes "all who will" and shows its concern for people regardless of race or color or nationality background. For "God is no respecter of persons" and Christ died for all.

Galen R. Weaver